

Amendments to Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1.-97. (canceled)

98. (new) A method for setting up anonymous telephone connections for a telephone conference among a plurality of conferees comprising:

assigning an anonymous originating telephone number to a switch located on a public switched telephone network;

sending a message from a first conferee's digital computer to a switch interface requesting the set-up of the telephone conference, the message containing a second conferee's telephone number on the public switched telephone network and the message being sent as the payload of a User Datagram Protocol ("UDP") datagram over an Internet Protocol ("IP") network;

sending a command from the switch interface to the switch in response to the datagram, the command requesting the set-up of the telephone conference between the first conferee and the second conferee; and

establishing a first telephone connection from the switch to the first conferee and a second telephone connection from the switch to the second conferee.

99. (new) The method according to claim 98 in which the message is a fixed length message.

100. (new) The method according to claim 98 in which the message further contains the first conferee's telephone number on the public switched telephone network.

101. (new) The method according to claim 100, further comprising:

storing the telephone numbers of the first conferee and the second conferee at the switch.

102. (new) The method according to claim 98 in which the first conferee's digital computer comprises an assigned address, further comprising:

storing the assigned address of the first conferee's digital computer at the switch.

103. (new) The method according to claim 98 in which the IP network is at least one of: the Internet or a private IP network.

104. (new) A method for setting up anonymous telephone connections for a telephone conference among a plurality of conferees comprising:

assigning an anonymous originating telephone number to a switch located on a public switched telephone network;

sending a message from a digital computer to a switch interface requesting the set-up of the telephone conference, the message containing a first conferee's telephone number on the public switched telephone network and a second conferee's telephone number on the public switched telephone network and the message being sent as the payload of a UDP datagram over an IP network;

sending a command from the switch interface to the switch in response to the datagram, the command requesting the set-up of the telephone conference between the first conferee and the second conferee; and

establishing a first telephone connection from the switch to the first conferee and a second telephone connection from the switch to the second conferee.

105. (new) The method according to claim 104 in which the message is a fixed length message.

106. (new) The method according to claim 104, further comprising:

storing the telephone numbers of the first conferee and the second conferee at the switch.

107 (new) The method according to claim 104 in which the digital computer comprises an assigned address, further comprising:

storing the assigned address of the digital computer at the switch.

108. (new) The method according to claim 104 in which the IP network is at least one of: the Internet or a private IP network.

109. (new) A system for setting up anonymous telephone connections for a telephone conference among a plurality of conferees comprising:

a switch located on a public switched telephone network, the switch assigned an anonymous originating telephone number;

a first conferee's digital computer located on an IP network, the first conferee's digital computer including program code for creating a UDP datagram for sending over the IP network, the datagram carrying a message requesting the set-up of the telephone conference, the message containing a second conferee's telephone number on the public switched telephone network;

a switch interface connected to the IP network and the switch, the switch interface being configured to respond to the UDP datagram by sending a command to the switch requesting the set-up of the telephone conference between the first conferee and the second conferee; and

wherein the switch is responsive to the command so as to establish a first telephone connection to the first conferee and a second telephone connection to the second conferee.

110. (new) The system according to claim 109 in which the message is a fixed length message.

111 (new) The system according to claim 109 in which the message further contains the first conferee's telephone number on the public switched telephone network.

112. (new) The system according to claim 111, further comprising:

the switch storing the telephone numbers of the first conferee and the second conferee.

113. (new) The system according to claim 109 in which the first conferee's digital computer comprises an assigned address, further comprising:

the switch storing the assigned address of the first conferee's digital computer..

114. (new) The system according to claim 109 in which the IP network is at least one of: the Internet or a private IP network.

115. (new) A system for setting up anonymous telephone connections for a telephone conference among a plurality of conferees comprising:

a switch located on a public switched telephone network, the switch assigned an anonymous originating telephone number;

a digital computer located on an IP network, the digital computer including program code for creating a UDP datagram for sending over the IP network, the datagram carrying a message requesting the set-up of the telephone conference, the message containing a first conferee's telephone number on a public switched telephone network and a second conferee's telephone number on the public switched telephone network;

a switch interface connected to the IP network and the switch, the switch interface being configured to respond to the UDP datagram by sending a command to the switch requesting the set-up of the telephone conference between the first conferee and the second conferee; and

wherein the switch is responsive to the command so as to establish a first telephone connection to the first conferee and a second telephone connection to the second conferee.

116. (new) The system according to claim 115 in which the message is a fixed length message.

117. (new) The system according to claim 115, further comprising:

the switch storing the telephone numbers of the first conferee and the second conferee.

118. (new) The system according to claim 115 in which the digital computer comprises an assigned address, further comprising:

the switch storing the assigned address of the digital computer.

119. (new) The system according to claim 115 in which the IP network is at least one of: the Internet or a private IP network.